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Bodybuilding, Community Health Disparities and Health Care, and Trans Health at Family Tree Clinic

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WINTER

WHAT TO DO

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MINNESOTA'S GLBT MAGAZINE
JANUARY 8-21, 2015

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JANUARY 8-21, 2015 | **ISSUE 512**

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Page 13: Photo by John Lombardi. Page 22: Photo by Richard Fleischman. Page 26: Photo by Hubert Bonnet. Page 42: Photo by Randy Stern.

ONLINE



Online Magazine



Prizes



LavenderMagazine.com

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ON THE COVER
It's winter in Minnesota! What's there to do? We'll tell you. From noshing to crashing, we've got a lot.
Red Bull Crashed Ice photography by Sebastian Marko/ Red Bull Content Pool



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Left to right: Ryan Schmisek, Debra Yerigan, Dan Goldberg and Vija Brookshire



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LAVENDER

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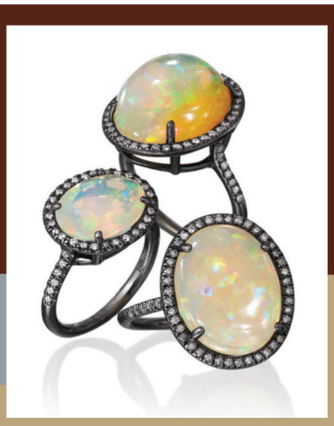
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OUR LAVENDER

FROM THE EDITOR | BY ANDY LIEN

Happy New Year! Welcome to 2015. I hope your holidays were wonderful and you had a chance to recharge your batteries. Or buy new ones. I bet they're on sale. So, as we give you an issue dedicated to what to do over these colder months, I'll give you a "From the Editor" about what we'll be doing the rest of the year. Even though it makes it feel more like a newsletter, this is really important stuff and it makes me so excited to be able to present it to you. It's our Editorial Calendar for 2015. Bigger and better, it's getting more detailed and including more people and subjects each year. We'll have the usual columns and include every facet of the GLBT community that we have been, as well as adding to each topic as listed below. More Health & Fitness, more Senior Living, the introduction of issues about Sports, Money, and Vehicles, as well as more pets, families, weddings, Pride, style, and Home & Garden—all presented through the Lavender lens.

But, still, take a look at it and see if you've got a story to share. Let me know. Do you have a remodel you just did with your partner that you'd like to show off? Did your wedding invitations just scream "style" as we haven't yet seen it? Is your gym so welcoming to the rainbow community that you'd love to have more people know about it? Is your doctor about the best, most empathetic and helpful person you've encountered? Really, as I've said before, you're our best resource. Drop me a line to let me know if you'd like to be a part of one of our stories in 2015: andy@lavendermagazine.com. After all, as it says on each of my pages in every issue, it's Our Lavender. ■



With you and
with thanks,



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Published: January 8

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WEDDING & HONEYMOON GETAWAYS
Special: Valentine's Gift Guide
Special: Senior Living
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2016 LAVENDER YELLOW PAGES &
WEDDING RESOURCE GUIDE
Published: December 23

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A WORD IN EDGEWISE | BY E.B. BOATNER

Once Upon a Time...

One December night in 1960, Jackie Washington, a slender, young, black folk singer, was walking down Boston's Commonwealth Avenue when a police car pulled over and two officers approached him. His offense? "Being abroad by night." Washington was taken to the station, having sustained a broken nose and twisted ankle, and charged with assault and battery.

The case came to court, but only the two officers' (plus four police witnesses') testimony was heard. The officers' lawyer alleged that Washington's claims were "Cheap counterfeit propaganda" designed to "enhance his position as a performer."

Another night, after last call, I was wandering somewhere between Sporters bar and the Charles Street jail, when a squad car pulled up and an officer asked what I was doing. I explained I'd lost my ride and I was gong to walk over Longfellow Bridge back to my Cambridge apartment. After a moment's conference with his partner, he leaned out and nodded at the Bally Ale bottle I was clutching. "If you'll put that down, we'll give you a ride home."

In those days Boston had politician Louise Day Hicks who disingenuously stated, "While a large part of my vote probably does come from bigoted people […] I know I'm not bigoted." The notorious anti-busing riots were enshrined in Stanley Forman's Pulitzer-Prize-winning "The Soiling of Old Glory," his photo of a black man being attacked by a white man wielding a huge American flag.

I was the same age as Emmett Till, murdered in Mississippi in 1955, and Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman, also murdered there in 1964. I see what happened continuing now, with black males being choked to death or shot. When a customer can selectively be killed at a Walmart for inspecting one of their products, something is very, very wrong. It has been for a very, very long time: please don't tell me that America isn't a racist country, North and South.

As is so often the case here, I have more subject than solution, but until it is recognized country-wide that we do have a sickness, we will not move toward a cure.

I was driven home safely that night. Washington was found guilty, but appealed and won his case, more than many black men today live do. ■





OUTFRONT MINNESOTA GALA

NOVEMBER 22, 2014

















WORLD AIDS DAY WITH THE ALIVENESS PROJECT

DECEMBER 1, 2014

















LAVENDER LENS | PHOTOS BY SOPHIA HANTZES



Photo by Sophia Hantzes



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Photo by Sophia Hantzes

FIRST THURSDAY AT MATTIE'S ON MAIN

DECEMBER 4, 2014


Photo by Sophia Hantzes


Photo by Sophia Hantzes



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Photo by Sophia Hantzes


Photo by Sophia Hantzes

MR/MISS CATASTROPHE CONTEST

January 10 • 7:30pm
The Saloon • 830 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis

Minnesota Leather Pride and The Saloon are slightly embarrassed to present this once-in-a-lifetime experience! It's a night of spectacle as you'll see people you'd never expect in drag—in drag! Watch as they strut their collective stuff all over the stage! Thrill as they try to remember the words to their songs! Gasp as they try to keep their wigs from shifting! Marvel at how we arrive at a winner! They'll also have local ladies providing entertainment … and don't forget … Jello shots! All funds raised will go to the Minnesota Leather Pride Weekend and the trio of new contests: Minnesota Leather Sir, Minnesota Leather boy, and Ms. Minnesota Leather Pride! No cover charge or dress code. But bring your cash. Bring your credit cards. Bring small barnyard animals or unwanted boyfriends to barter. And bring yourselves in whatever street-legal attire you care to wear to revel in the fun! Visit www.saloonmn.com for more info.

EAT, DRINK & BE MARRIED

January 17 • 7:30pm
January 18 • 3pm
Hopkins High School Auditorium • 2400 Lindbergh Dr., Hopkins

Join One Voice for a musical feast celebrating the people making GLBT rights a reality. Join us for food and drink, stories and song, including the world premiere of Music Makers, Dreamers of Dreams by Minnesota composer, Christopher Aspaas. With guest performers Michael Gruber and choirs from Shir Tikvah and Mayflower UCC, and the Tretter GLBT archive photo display. Visit www.ovmc.org for tickets and more info.

TORTURE – HOW IT AFFECTS THE GLBT COMMUNITY AT HOME AND ABROAD

January 22 • 7:30-9pm
Shir Tikvah • 1360 West Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis

Hear an exceptional panel of experts talk about torture. This distinguished group of people will discuss the reality of torture and how torture is used against the global GLBT community including conversion therapy—dangerous attempts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity in the United States. This is a chance for all of us to learn what is being done, and more importantly what we can do individually and collectively to help. The distinguished panel includes Barb Frey, Dr. Steve Miles, Samantha Ames, and Neal Porter. Participating organizations include Center for Victims of Torture, Human Rights Center—University of Minnesota Law School, Human Rights Program—University of Minnesota School of Liberal Arts, and The National Center for Lesbian Rights. No cover charge. Visit Facebook page for more info.

Want to show off your recently remodeled home? **The Minneapolis & Saint Paul Home Tour,** April 25-26, 2015, is accepting nominations of recent home remodels at www.MSPHomeTour.com. Click on "submit a home" for the option to apply online or download an application, due January 16 or soon thereafter. Contact coordinator Margo Ashmore at Margo@MargoAshmore.com or call 612-867-4874 for more info. ■



WINTER

WHAT TO DO

By Shane Lueck



Photo by Hubert Bonnet

WINTER HOLIDAYS IN THE SOVIET ERA

The Museum of Russian Art, Minneapolis
Through January 25
$9 adult, $7 children
www.tmora.org

The exhibition Winter Holidays in the Soviet Era uncovers the rich story of winter holiday traditions in 20th century Russia, from the late Imperial Christmas to the Soviet New Year of the Stalin and Khrushchev periods. Drawing upon the collection of Kim Balaschak, one of the world's largest, the exhibition presents a remarkable selection of seven hundred holiday ornaments and related materials.

WELLS FARGO WINTER SKATE

St. Paul
Through February 1
$4 skate rental (Free with Wells Fargo check card or credit card)
www.wellsfargowinterskate.com

The historic Landmark Center creates a beautiful backdrop for the outdoor rink in the heart of downtown St. Paul.

ICE CASTLES

Eden Prairie
Through March 8
$12.95
www.icecastles.com

Imagine a magical collision of the Apostle Island ice caves, frozen waterfalls, and glaciers formed into towering organic archways, tunnels, slot canyons, stalactites, and frozen thrones. By day this frozen wonderland glimmers with glacial blues and frosty whites. After dark the ice formations glow multi-colored with the help of thousands of LED lights within the ice.

INDOOR SKATING AT THE DEPOT

Milwaukee Road Depot, Minneapolis
Through March 22
$9 adults, $6 children, $7 skate rental
www.thedepotminneapolis.com

This indoor skating rink has a wall of glass offering views of the downtown skyline.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



Photo by Tracy LeCapitaine Photography

GRRRL SCOUT

Nomad World Pub, Minneapolis
January 10, February 14, March 14
$6
www.grrrlscout.com

A queer dance party held every second Saturday, this event is 21+. Although each event has different promotions and themes, it's always a queer dance party with DJ Girl Named Jane. Follow Grrrl Scout on Facebook to hear about what is going to make each event unique. Everyone is welcome.

WINTER FARMERS MARKETS

Minneapolis and St. Paul
Through April 18
www.mplsfarmersmarket.com
www.stpaulfarmersmarket.com

Retain the ability to shop locally through the winter! You will find a wide variety of meat items, cheese, honey, bakery goods, strudel, jams & jellies, pickled items, chocolates, mustard & hot sauces, peirogis, apples & seasonal decorating items.

OUT THERE 2015

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
January 8 – January 31
$75 package for all four shows, $20 individually
www.walkerart.org

Out There brings startling, vital, provocative, and often joyous new forms of theatrical expression to the Twin Cites. Beginning as a modest two-weekend series, Out There has grown into a full-fledged month-long festival featuring new global performances, workshops, dialogue sessions, salons, and other activities throughout January.

OMNIFEST 2015

Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul
January 9 – February 19
$8 first film, 15% discount on additional films
www.smm.org

Everyone's favorite giant screen film festival is back this winter!

Omnifest 2015 will bring five giant screen films to the Science Museum's Omnitheater – both audience favorites and brand new features: *Hubble* presents imagery of the cosmos—from our own celestial neighborhood to galaxies billions of light years away; *D-Day: Normandy 1944* brings the largest Allied operation of World War II to the Omnitheater's giant screen; Narrated by Meryl Streep and featuring the music of Sting, *The Living Sea* celebrates the beauty and diversity of the Earth's oceans; *The Greatest Places* embarks on a journey to seven of the world's most dynamic landscapes; and *Flight of the Butterflies* meets a determined Canadian scientist attempting to unravel one of science's great mysteries: finding the mysterious overwintering location of the monarchs.

SCIENCE FUSION

Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul
January 10 – February 14
$13 adults, $10 children museum admission
www.smm.org

Now an annual four-part event series, Science Fusion focuses on the accomplishments of members of the Twin Cities' African American, American Indian, Latino and Hispanic, and Asian American communities in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Adults and kids alike will learn through interactive displays and presentations from scientists and educators at leading Twin Cities companies.

10TH ANNUAL U.S. POND HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Lake Nokomis, Minneapolis
January 16 – 18
$500-650 team registration,
www.uspondhockey.com

Players from around the world compete in the U.S. Pond Hockey Championships. Either register a team or just show up as a fan to support the great winter pastime.

LAKE HARRIET WINTER KITE FESTIVAL

Minneapolis
January 17
Free
www.minneapolisparks.org

Minnesota Kite Society experts will demonstrate their skills maneuvering spectacular kites throughout the day, and offer their expertise to kite flying enthusiasts and to those who are new to the pastime. Bring your own kite, or buy an inexpensive one at the lake. Other activities at the festival include ice fishing, horse-drawn wagon rides, snowshoeing, medallion hunt and marshmallow roast.

WINTER FROLIC

North West Fur Company Post, Pine City, MN
January 17
$9
http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/north-west-company-fur-post

Come and learn a few new activities that will help time pass as an enjoyable winter. You'll be able to toss a curling stone and learn about the game's connection to the North West Company or play a round of Ojibwe snow snake and see how far it travels down the icy track. And of course there are snowshoes to explore the winter wonderland on the site's two miles of trails. Learn about winter travel during the fur trade. For the faint of heart, warm yourself by blazing fires, or sip a cup of cocoa and watch the festivities from the sun soaked visitor center. There will be something for all ages and interests.

2015 ST. PAUL WINTER CARNIVAL

St. Paul
January 22 – February 1
Varies by event
www.winter-carnival.com

Featuring the Beer Dabbler, parades, contests, fireworks and more, every member of the family is sure to find something they enjoy.

TWINSFEST 2015

Target Field, Minneapolis
January 23 – 25
$20 adults, $10 children
http://minnesota.twins.mlb.com

One of the largest team-run fan festivals in professional sports, TwinsFest is an annual fundraiser for the Minnesota Twins Community Fund.

ILLUMINAUGHTI: SECRET SOCIETY STRIPTEASE

Town House Bar, St. Paul
January 24
$5
www.Facebook.com/Vigilantease

The Vigilantease Collective brings you back into the world of top-secret burlesque, cloak-and-dagger drag, covert special guests, and initiation rites (aka contests). Win a bar tab and more! Come for the show, and then stay to show off with the TVC Dance Party. Not all of the specifics are finalized yet, so some details might change.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Photo by Sebastian Marko/Red Bull Content Pool

2015 RED BULL CRASHED ICE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

St. Paul
January 22 – 24
Free
www.redbullcrashedice.com

The sport of ice cross downhill (a mix of downhill skiing, skating, and roller derby) continues with a visit to St. Paul as the sport continues to grow in popularity with U.S. fans.

WHAT TO DO



NOBEL CREATIONS: INSPIRED BY THE NOBEL PRIZE

American Swedish Institute, Minneapolis
January 31 – May 24
$9 adult, $5 children
www.asimn.org

Discover the world's greatest honor through fashion and music. Couture designs by Beckmans College of Design and original musical scores from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm all inspired by the Nobel Laureates in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, Economic Sciences, and Peace.

CITY OF LAKES LOPPET

Lake Calhoun, Minneapolis
January 30 – February 1
$150 registration fee
www.loppet.org

The urban cross country ski festival presents winter activities for the whole family with events jam-packed into one weekend.

ART SLED RALLY

Powderhorn Park, Minneapolis
January 31
Free
www.artsledrally.com

A mass sledding spectacle inspired by the history of mass winter events at Powderhorn Park that began around a hundred years ago.

POLAR BEAR PLUNGE

Various Cities
January 31 – March 21
Raise a minimum of $75
www.plungemn.org

A unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to raise money in support of Special Olympics athletes by jumping into frigid Minnesota waters.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS ARCTIC BLAST SNOWMOBILE RALLY

Wahkon, Minnesota
February 6 – 9
$35
www.vikings.com/schedule/arctic-blast

Snowmobile with current and former Vikings players & cheerleaders at the Vikings Arctic Blast Snowmobile Rally. Gather prize tickets from designated Blast Points for a chance to win thousands of dollars in prizes. A fun way to enjoy Minnesota winters while raising dollars to benefit the Vikings Children's Fund.

THE SECRETS OF SLAVE SONGS

Minnesota History Center, St. Paul
February 8
$20 adults, $15 children
www.minnesotahistorycenter.org

"The Secrets of Slave Songs" is an examination of slavery, its abolition and consequences in the United States. Expressive choreography combines with moving renditions of Negro Spirituals and other songs borne from the American slavery experience, illuminating the complicated journey in our nation's history.

Photo courtesy of the Nobel Museum

VALENTINE'S DAY TC 5K

Lake Harriet, Minneapolis
February 14
$30 individual, $50 couple
www.tcmevents.org

Twin Cities in Motion presents the 30th annual Valentine's 5k race. Open to couples and singles, "relationship status" backtags make the perfect icebreaker.

MILL CITY BAKE-OFF CHALLENGE

Mill City Museum, Minneapolis
February 14
Included with museum admission: $11 adults, $6 children
www.millcitymuseum.org

In true "test kitchen" style, Mill City Museum staff will create an original recipe on-the-spot after guests choose the ingredients from the Pillsbury Bake-Off official list of qualifying ingredients.

BOCK FEST

Schell's Brewery Grounds, New Ulm, MN
February 14
$10
www.schellsbrewery.com

An all-outdoor event on the grounds of Schell's Brewery, featuring the release of the seasonal bock beer, with food and other drink. The Bock Fest Boys play all day, so come party with 5,000 other "festive" souls and head downtown afterward! Always held, no matter the weather, from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm, this events is only open to 21+, with most of the crowd between 25 – 45.

NORTH COAST NOSH CURATED BY SIOUX CHEF SEAN SHERMAN

Minnesota History Center, St. Paul
February 19
$20
www.minnesotahistorycenter.org

Join in a celebration of the traditions and flavors of Minnesota's indigenous people curated by Sioux Chef Sean Sherman for the Heavy Table's latest local food and beverage event in the North Coast Nosh series. Ticket gets access to tasting and conversation with some indigenous and pre-colonial food and drink purveyors, in the convivial setting that "North Coast Nosh" is known for. Visitors will also enjoy access to the "Modern Spirit" exhibit of work by famed Ojibwe artist George Morrison, now on view at the Minnesota History Center.

Photo courtesy of Cirque Ziva



CIRQUE ZIVA

Ames Center, Burnsville
February 13
$20 – $40
www.ames-center.com

The Golden Dragon Acrobats present *Cirque Ziva*, a new world-class cirque spectacular. This fast-paced, technically-innovative performance showcases traditional Chinese acrobats; dance and costumes; ancient and contemporary music; and modern theatrical techniques. The renowned acrobats dazzle with amazing feats of athleticism, daring heart-stopping stunts and the grace of their centuries-old art form. The large cast and dazzling production designs illustrate just how breathtaking Chinese acrobatics can be. *Cirque Ziva* is sure to entertain, delight and keep audiences of all ages in suspense.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

WHAT TO DO

14TH ANNUAL WINTERFEST

Union Depot, St. Paul
February 27 – 28
$75 individual night, $135 two-night package
www.mncraftbrew.org

This craft beer sampling event celebrates beer brewed in Minnesota by the breweries and brew pubs that are current members of the Minnesota Craft Brewers Guild. Chase out the winter chill with a multitude of Winter Warmers, hearty food, beer education, entertainment, and music.

2015 WISHES & MORE WINTER BALL

Marriott City Center, Minneapolis
February 28
$175 – 225
www.wishesandmore.org

Straighten the black ties, click your high heels, and step aboard a luxurious flight around the world. Experience world-class cultures and wishes for one exclusive night only. Join the Marriott City Center in downtown Minneapolis for an evening of bidding, dining, dancing, and a program showcasing wishes coming true. Proceeds benefit Wishes & More, an organization which enhances the life of a child fighting a terminal or life-threatening condition by providing extraordinary experiences including wishes, scholarships, memorials, and more.

FUR FLEE 8

Superior, WI
March 5 – 8
$80 registration fee, plus hotel
www.ncbears.com

A bear-filled winter weekend getaway of partying, playing, swimming, hot-tubbing and more at a private hotel! Event details are still being worked out, but early registration is open and the host hotel is accepting reservations. Come join the Fur Flee festivities which may include (subject to change): a private bear hotel with 112 rooms, Saturday night party with open bar, afternoon pool party and lunch, after-hours hospitality suite, winter Alpine Slide at Spirit Mountain, and the company of 200+ bears for the weekend.

GRUMPY OLD MEN FESTIVAL

Wabasha, MN
February 28
Fishing contest is $5 for adults, $3 for kids
www.travelinf5.wix.com/grumpyoldmenfest

Go to Wabasha for an ice fishing contest, Ice Shacks 'n' Plaid Parade, cribbage tournament, bingo, minnow races, Annual Grumpy Plunge, hotdish luncheon and more.

CABIN FEVER DAY

Winehaven Winery, Chisago City, MN
March 7 – 8
Free
www.winehaven.com

Got cabin fever? Come and taste some vintage selections that will bring you out of hibernation. This is the only event of the year where visitors can taste and purchase Winehaven's classics that have been aging in the cellar for years. There is no fee for admission and reservations are not required– bring your friends!

MUSTACHE MARCH RUN

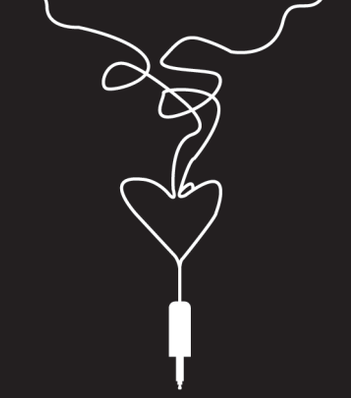
Duluth
March 7
$30, no day-of registration
www.momentumracingevents.com

Growing season is here yet again! Get ready to rip it up at the Twin Ports most furry and festive fun run of the year and revel in your mustachioed glory in this March tradition! Decorative mustaches will be available for those unable or unwilling to grow their own. Run along the beautiful lakewalk on this 2.65 mile course.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



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QHIA DAB NEEG: HMONG STORIES ON FILM

Minnesota History Center, St. Paul
March 21
Free
www.minnesotahistorycenter.org

"Qhia Dab Neeg" is Hmong for "storytelling," and represents the traditional way the Hmong carried their history forward to future generations. After they arrived in the U.S., the Hmong began to see their stories being ignored or told for them by others. Now they are using the contemporary American storytelling tool of film to take back their history and tell their stories in their own voices.

FITGER'S BOCKFEST

Fitger's Courtyard, Duluth
March 12 – 14
Free admission
www.fitgers.com

The weekend opens with the Blessing of the Lake Superior Split Rock Bock Beer and progresses with entertainment in the beer tent, a Volksmarch on the Lakewalk, stein race, Black Forest cake eating contest, team beer drinking, and more.

MINNESOTA ROLLERGIRLS CHAMPIONSHIP

Roy Wilkins Auditorium, St. Paul
March 14
$13
www.mnrollergirls.com

Cheer on the Minnesota RollerGirls as they fight for the championship. Don't miss your chance to see who will raise the Golden Skate.

FROZEN MINNEHAHA FALLS

Minneapolis
Free
www.minneapolisparks.org

With a slight minty-blue tint, Minnehaha Falls is the perfect backdrop for some cold-weather selfies or just a glorious bit of nature to enjoy.

LEBANON HILLS REGIONAL PARK

Eagan
Free
www.co.dakota.mn.us

With over 12 miles of winter ski trails, the park also features special events open to the public such as candle-lit trails in the evening and nature scavenger hunts. After your fun in the snow, return to the visitors center for a cup of hot chocolate or spiced cider.

THEODORE WIRTH PARK

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Featuring the first inner-city snowboard program, now with snow-making equipment, Theodore Wirth Park also plays host to cross-country skiing and sledding/tubing opportunities. ■

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A Bright New Boise. Photo by Justin D. Gallo Photography

A BRIGHT NEW BOISE

Jan. 16 – 25
Open Eye Figure Theatre, 560 E. 24th St., Mpls.
(612) 643-1231
www.loudmouthcollective.com

Samuel D. Hunter (*The Whale*), a dramatist in his mid-30s, has been taking the country by storm with revealing plays about ordinary people. He has a way of creating empathy for characters who audiences may tend to be stand-offish toward. Loudmouth Collective is producing his acclaimed *A Bright New Boise*. Director Natalie Nocacek says that one of her favorite things about his work is that he never judges his characters or their actions. She shares, "He presents them fully, flaws and all, and asks the audience to consider the full human being before passing judgment."

Novacek describes: "Will (played by Adam Whisner) comes to the Boise, Idaho Hobby Lobby searching for his son, Alex (Spencer Harrison Levin). Will was a founding member of an 'end-of-days' type church, but left abruptly in the wake of a highly publicized scandal involving the death of a young church member while on a spiritual quest with their pastor. While Will still believes in the essence of the church he founded, he can't reconcile those beliefs with the actions of their leader. In the midst of his own crisis of faith, Will is also confronted by his co-workers' and estranged son's opinions and judgements of his faith and his scandalized church."

OLIVER!

Feb. 4 – Mar. 1
Pantages Theatre,
710 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
(800) 859-7469
www.HennepinTheatreTrust.org

Director Peter Rothstein read the script for Lionel Bart's musical *Oliver!* as well as the novel it's based on, Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist,* just over a year ago and says he "was struck by its relevance. Dickens was examining the impact of poverty on the most vulnerable members of society: children. He was also turning a critical eye on the cost of industrialization and its dehumanizing impact. The novel is both a gritty piece of realism and a fairy tale. The combination of these two seemingly contrary aesthetics offers great theatrical potential."

Rothstein also has two more aces up his sleeve. Gifted singer-actor Bradley Greenwald will play the iconic role of Fagin and the Minnesota BoyChoir has signed on. Theater Latté Da and Hennepin Theatre Trust are partnering to produce one of the great musicals of British theater as a Broadway Re-Imagined production.

OUT THERE

Through Jan. 24
Walker Art Center,
1750 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
(612) 375-7600
www.walkerart.org

Walker Art Center's annual January performance series of avant-garde performing arts opens with Richard Maxwell and the New York City Players' piece, *The Evening*. (Jan. 8–10). The style is minimal. Direction is neutral. Acting is deadpan. The setting is a dive bar.

The second offering is *Still Standing You* performed by the Belgian-Portugese duo, CAMPO (Jan. 15–17). Pieter Ampe and Guilherme Garrido take joy in tumbling choreography, male-to-male body contact, and nudity. You may speculate whether the pair are brothers, enemies, little boys, or lovers.

The third (Jan. 22–24) is Mariano Pensotti's "filmic drama" *Cineastas (Filmmakers)*. A split-screen set is used to bring four works by filmmakers in Buenos Aires to bring about a mixture of cinematic techniques: montage, flashbacks, cross-cuts, and voice overs.



2 Sugars, Room for Cream. Photo by Richard Fleischman

THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE

Jan. 9 – Feb. 1
Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave., Mpls.
(612) 333-3010
www.theatreintheround.org

Director Dann Peterson describes the situation within Jay Presson Allen's script adapted from Muriel Sparks's novel: "Miss Jean Brodie (played by Anna Olson) is an independent-minded teacher at an all-girls school between the wars, and she chooses some girls from her class to be the "Brodie Set," singled out allegedly for their unique personalities, but more apparently for Miss Brodie's gratification of her own ego and the imitation of some of her own religious ideals. In opposition to the private school's strict curriculum and authorities, Miss Brodie teaches her girls whatever she believes is important. She often lets the Brodie Set see or hear glimpses of her personal life which again may not keep up the standard of appearances that the board of governors of the school and the up-tight head mistress, Miss Mackay (Mary Kay Fortier Spalding), feel appropriate."



Oliver!. Photo by Heidi Bohnenkamp

Peterson observes that "underlying the story is a battle of ideas: Miss Brodie's Calvinist beliefs against the Roman Catholic beliefs of her paramour, Mr. Lloyd (Emanuel Ardeleanu). Over the course of the play, fascism rises to prominence and becomes a threat in Europe. With the impending war coming to Italy and Spain with the rise of Mussolini and Franco, Miss Brodie encourages her girls to take a heroic approach and this urging has devastating effects."

2 SUGARS, ROOM FOR CREAM

Through Jan. 18
Park Square's Boss Theatre,
408 St. Peter St., St. Paul
(651) 291-7005
www.parksquaretheatre.org

The extraordinarily successful two-woman show from writer-performers Shanan Custer and Carolyn Pool is being reprised again; this time on Park Square's new Andy Boss stage. Pool says they "portray lots of different women in many different kinds of relationships. Everything in the show is grounded in the reality of everyday life. We just hope to make it funnier than every day might be. And while the show appeals to a wide audience (men tend to like it just as much as women do) there is a special connection that happens when women see themselves portrayed realistically on stage, quite specifically, women in their late 30s and early 40s, who aren't idealized or crammed into cookie cutter images that we so often see in movies and plays." ■

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TWIN CITIES QUORUM IS GROWING AND HAS MOMENTUM!!

The board of Quorum, the Twins Cities LGBT & Allied Chamber of Commerce, is proud to be taking the next step towards better serving our fantastic membership and community. Twin Cities Quorum has seen tremendous growth and exciting momentum in providing our membership continued value. We are thrilled to announce that Rebecca Waggoner of OutFront will be guiding us in 2015 as the Interim Executive Director of Twin Cities Quorum. We know under Rebeccas leadership, we will be able to offer even more to our growing and engaged membership.



Amy Ruzick of RE/MAX Results has delivered top notch realtor services in the Twin Cities since 2002. Amy enjoys serving the community, and has made that a part of her business model, Amy has served on the board of Twin Cities Quorum for 3 years, and is currently the President.



Mark Waldorf, President of OutLoud Promotions. OutLoud Promotions is a full service promotional products company that is LGBTBE® certified and a Green certified business. Mark is starting his fourth year as a board member of Quorum serving as Events Chair and currently Vice President.



Adam Elg is the Founder and President of AchievementInsight, a business and life coaching firm. He enters his second year on the Quorum board and will be assuming the role of Treasurer.



Seth Viebrock is the CEO of local web and application development company Origin Eight. Origin Eight designs and builds web sites and applications for higher education, non-profits, private industry and the government. Seth is currently the Secretary of Quorum



Peter Tollefson is a Digital Marketing Manager at Target, where he also helps lead the LGBTA Business Council (ERG). Peter is entering his second year on the Quorum Board of Directors and will be leading the Workplace Alliance group.



Erica Fields is the President and owner of Brooks Grain, LLC. Brooks Grain is a specialty grain merchant, providing rye to millers and distillers in North America, and is LGBTBE® certified. Erica is starting her first year on the board.



Harvey Perle is the operating Principal of Perle & Co., a Manufacturer's Representative Agency specializing in the Housewares and Gift industries since 1990. Perle & Co, is LGBTBE® certified through the NGLCC. Harvey is beginning his third year on the board.



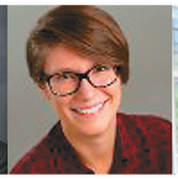
Tiffany Paulson brings over ten years of marketing and communications experience to Quorum, mostly within the non-profit sector. The main focus of her career has been utilizing her marketing and communications skills to improve her community through various non-profits and groups.



Cathy Muldoon is founder and CEO of Growth-Passion-Success® an NGLCC certified woman owned business offering talent solutions to a variety of organizations including HR Consulting, Recruiting, Executive Coaching, and Customized Training.



Keith Taylor is an allied supporter of Twin Cities Quorum, works with the Minnesota Lynx, and seeks to work with others to overcome daily challenges and obstacles. Keith is beginning his first year on the board.



Amy Neis is a Financial Planner with MetLife Premier Client Group. She is passionate about her commitment to helping people plan for their futures. Amy is now on her second year of being on the Board of Twin Cities Quorum.



Kevin Ringdahl is a Vice President and Financial Advisor at Morgan Stanley with the Waterbury Group. He specializes in values-based financial planning. Kevin is now on his second year of being on the Board of Twin Cities Quorum.



Cheryl Maloney is a longtime pillar of the Twin Cities LGBTQ community. She says "I am looking forward to supporting Rebecca in her new role as the ED and collaborating with my colleagues on the Board and the Committee Volunteers! 2015 is going to be awesome!"



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EAT THE MENU | BY BRADLEY TRAYNOR | PHOTOS BY HUBERT BONNET







(Clockwise from left): Chef/Owner Gavin Kaysen; Slow Cooked Atlantic Cod with Tunisian Cous Cous; and Diane Yang's Buttercup Squash Custard with Brown Sugar Marshmallow and Quince.

EAT THE MENU: SPOON AND STABLE

Everybody wants a reservation at Spoon and Stable. For good reason. It's the hottest new restaurant to pop onto an already scorching-hot restaurant scene. From the moment lauded chef and native son Gavin Kaysen first announced he was leaving NYC and the helm of Café Boulud to open his very own restaurant in Minneapolis, countless foodies, critics, well-wishers and nosy neighbors have hoped to snag a table at this, the latest in a slew of much-anticipated restaurants. According to Kaysen, since they began taking reservations in November, the phone has not stopped ringing. Off the hook.

Wanting a reservation and getting a reservation, however, are not one and the same. In fact, as I learned firsthand, it helps to know people. It also helps to know people who know you have a reputation for eating food. Lots of it. Like entire menus of food. It's a talent. Or a cry for help. I can't begin to tell you how many times I've been told by well-meaning waitstaff I was ordering too much food, only to have them slap me on the back by the end of the meal, marveling at my power to pack it away.

Thankfully for me (and you, dear reader), it's just that mildly inappropriate reputation among friends that won me, my partner, and a pair of good friends a golden ticket for a table at Spoon and Stable one very special wintry night in December.

I'll cut right to the chase. It was amazing. If you came to this article just to find out whether Spoon and Stable lives up to the hype, I'll save you the trouble of traipsing through the unbridled food porn that follows and proclaim, yes, it lives up to the hype. But, and this is why I hope you'll keep reading, the hype is not the whole story. By a longshot.

Back to that very special wintry night in December.

From the moment I walked through the doors, clichés-be-damned, I knew I was some place special. There is a palpable warmth to Spoon and Stable that's alluring. And pregnant with paradox. The physical space is at once modern and old-fashioned. An open layout floods the room with light and sound, instantly sweeping you up in its embrace while the exposed brick walls and asymetrical contours of its former 1906 horse stable self-absorb the din of dining and cast comforting shadows throughout. You feel a part of something vibrant, moving, and alive without having to scream at your table mates to be heard.

Add to that an ebullient, well-appointed house staff, clearly still giddy over the opportunity to work for a chef like Kaysen, and you feel like you've gotten half a dozen hugs before even putting in your drink order.

By all means, don't forget to put in your drink order. The depth and array of craft cocktails, both alcoholic and non-, from the skilled, artistic hands of Robb Jones were greatly appreciated. If you don't see anything on the menu that suits your particular taste or personality that evening, don't hesitate to ask for what you want. And forget not the wine. As if you could forget the wine at Spoon and Stable. The restaurant's architectural centerpiece or "chandelier," as Kaysen lov-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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ingly puts it, is a floor-to-ceiling, fully enclosed wine stable. Stable boy cum wine director Bill Summerville curates the noteworthy collection in addition to being the General Manager.

Drinks ordered, it's time to talk food. This article is called "Eat the Menu," after all.

And eat the (entire) menu we did, the four of us, save two items (not wanting to appear overzealous).

You certainly don't need to order as ambitiously as we did to have a wonderful experience, but don't be afraid to either.

The beauty of the Spoon and Stable menu lies in its versatility. You can adventure eat your way across it, sharing several dishes from each of six areas currently on the winter menu. Experiment. Be bold. Who knows when you'll get another reservation. As always, Chef will happily course out any combination for you.

Conversely, you can selfishly indulge in a singular bowl of soup and an entree, leaving the table completely satisfied.

Our first foray onto the menu saw us on a stroll through the Garden. The Fire Roasted Carrots were a table favorite, tender and smoky with the delicate crunch of petite croutons and sunflower seeds. I had a torrid love affair with the aptly named Fairytale Pumpkin Soup. Upon wresting the bowl free from the table, I fantasized about jumping inside it, floating atop the coffee brioche raft all the while lapping up its golden sage-scented nectar.

The entire table was pleasantly surprised by the Belgian Endive Salad. In fact, we roundly underestimated this dish. The rich earthiness of the stilton set against the light and crisp endive with sweet bursts of fresh pear taught us a valuable lesson. Don't underestimate endive. At least when in the care of Gavin Kaysen.

The Chilled section blew the table away with a Bison Tartare I hope will remain forever on the menu. Not to be outdone, the Dill Cured Salmon was just as delightful as the story of its origin. Like several others, it pays homage to the culinary comforts of Chef Kaysen's late grandmother, Dorothy.

And let us not pass over Pasta without mentioning the Risotto. Like the endive salad, I expected little of this dish. Until it was in my mouth. Its velvety-smooth texture dotted with darts of parmesan wrapped around the tongue like a warm, salty blanket. I wanted to climb in the bowl and cuddle with this risotto. And then perhaps marry it.

From the Sea and Land sections of the menu, our table shared all but the Poached Sturgeon (sorry, dear sturgeon, it was nothing personal). The Cider Glazed Chicken and Dorothy's Pot Roast took table top honors. For my part, I'd recommend the Pot Roast. And by recommend, I mean eat every night of the week, if afforded the chance. Fans of fins would do well to order the Slow Cooked Atlantic Cod.

Some sixteen dishes on and our epic gastronom-athon was nearing its end. As the parade of flavors still echoed on the tongue and grateful waistbands began to grow, the table pondered its journey. And marveled at the sheer embarassment of talent we'd just paid witness to.

And then came dessert! Suffice it to say, Executive Pastry Chef Diane Yang's Haralson Apple Crisp will ruin you. As will her Buttercup Squash Custard. All for the better. Pair with a cup of coffee or an espresso and I defy you not to find words like "unreal," "life-changing," and "nap" at the tip of your thoroughly sated tongue.

Spoon and Stable's food, like its façade, is full of paradoxes. Tasty, rewarding paradoxes Gavin Kaysen seems completely comfortable with. Simple dishes with complex flavors. Basic ingredients elevated with elaborate skill. Seriously delicious food that doesn't take itself too seriously. Unlike many of his competitors, it's not pretentious or precious. It's honest. And earnest. Like all good Minnesotans. Which bodes well for Spoon and Stable. And our appetites. ■

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SPORTS | PLAYING FOR THE OTHER TEAM | BY NELL GELHAUS

A Win for Transgender Rights, But Hurt Remains

The bathroom. A place to pee, apply Chap Stick, kiss the cute girl from the bar…or, a place to be ID'ed, thrown-out, beaten, or tased. The latter is reality for our trans brothers and sisters and the setting of our community's most recent battle.

"The thing that is hardest for me is…I pass very well, which is fine…but I know when I grab that handle to that bathroom or that locker room, I'm taking a deep breath, thinking, 'is someone gonna out me?' You're always looking behind your shoulder. We're not going in there to see your son or daughter naked. We are probably the *most uncomfortable* person in that entire room."

AJ Fredrick and I are seated at a table in the quiet back room of The Town House bar. With us is Fredrick's fellow trans activist, Lee Terrell. Both attended the Minnesota State High School League board meeting on December 4, where, in a monumental vote, the board overwhelmingly passed a trans-inclusive policy for high school sports teams. It was a win for the transgender community, though not without struggle.

Fredrick and Terrell are past their high school years, of course, but nevertheless, felt it imperative to attend the meeting. "I have a fourteen year old, and she's one of my biggest supporters," said Fredrick. "That pushed me to go to this, and to fight for kids. When everyone's telling you you're so wrong and you're a freak, and you're this predator that wants to see the opposite gender naked or steal scholarships….it's infuriating to me. Because that could be my kid."

Children are whom the policy is designed to protect. The purpose of the MSHSL's policy was first and foremost to allow high school athletes to compete in a "safe, competitive and friendly environment, free of discrimination." Undeniably, safety is one of the primary concerns of the GLBT community. It's widely reported that people who identify as transgender are far more likely to experience physical violence than those who are cisgender (people who identify as the gender they were assigned at birth).

Ellen Krug is a lawyer, Executive Director of Call for Justice, LLC (as well as a Lavender columnist), and a trailblazing transgender advocate & educator. She addresses those troubling stats.

"Of all things, this is what I fear most. I can see how a mugging could turn into a hate crime directed to me given my voice. I think about that a great deal. I watch where I walk; I am always vigilant of who's around me; I pay very close attention to the crime stats for my neighborhood, especially the street crimes/muggings."

Besides safety, what does the policy actually mean for transgender students? It means they are able to participate in athletic activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity. It provides education for teachers, coaches, counselors, and administrators regarding transgender sensitivity, and ensures reasonable and appropriate restrooms and locker rooms are accessible. It prompts correct name and pronoun usage, and permits a student to dress according to their identity.

Terrell believes that even the fact the policy exists and has been made public creates a healthier atmosphere for students. "Growing up I thought, I'm the only one. I'm weird. I'm different. I didn't want to be. I wanted to fit in somewhere." He says the constant back-and-forth transgender youth feel about their place in society can be detrimental. "Being forced to step in and out of who you are—now you're on a girls' team, now you're on a boys'. It starts to mess with your head."

Krug, too, sees the adoption of the policy as a positive. "It's all about allowing us to 'show up' as human. I do a great deal of speaking about the concept of 'Gray Area Thinking': that many people live in the gray but that society is geared around black and white—good vs. bad, right vs. wrong, boy vs. girl, success vs. failure. The reality is that no, much of everything in the world is shades of gray—thank god! Trans people are so gray; we're the epitome of gray. Allowing us to show up in sports, five years from now won't be a big deal."

Getting the policy passed, though, was a big deal, and mired in controversy. The erroneously-named Minnesota Child Protection League purchased two full-page blatantly anti-trans "ads" in the *Star Tribune* in the past months. The first of these, published in September, read:

"A male wants to shower beside your 14-year-old daughter. Are YOU ok with that?"

The insinuation here, of course, is not a new one targeted at the GLBT community, painting us as sexual predators. The tactic is cheap, and viscerally offensive.

Ellen Krug shares her reaction:. "I was very upset….the ad just showed me that the one thing people can run to is fear. Fear is the thing that unites people; it's something that's happened for centuries. That's what's worked for tyrants near and far. The people who hate/are ignorant about trans people are united by fear—that somehow we will disrupt their way of life. I was saddened by it, but I also know that the tide of history is on the side of trans people. As they say, we shall overcome."

Facing backlash, the *Star Tribune*'s VP of Marketing and Public Relations Steve Yaeger made a statement to the *City Pages*, saying, *"The ad in question met all the requirements of our ad policy. Not much I can tell you about it beyond that."* Pressed to define the *Strib*'s requirements for refusing an ad, Yaeger declined further comment.

In addition to this startling lack of empathy, the Tribune ran a second ad in late November, which stated:

"The end of girls' sports? Her dreams of a scholarship shattered, your 14-year-old daughter just lost her position on an all-girl team to a male … and now she may have to shower with him. Are you willing to let that happen?"

Truly, the deception within both ads not only trivializes the struggle of a young person identifying as transgender, but is also grossly ignorant and dangerous.

AJ Frederick's response? "It's like they're trying to make up things to say. You know, first…you're a pervert. Oh, well, that didn't work, so, hey, let's say they're trying to take our daughter or son's scholarship away. Obviously, none of these people know a trans person. If they did, they wouldn't be saying that, because it IS a struggle, and you have to be really strong to survive the ridicule."

Even Governor Dayton weighed in at the end of a press conference in early December.

"I think some of the hate-mongering that was going on was despicable. The idea that Clay Matthews is going to change gender status to go trample young girls on a basketball court, I mean, it's just so… it's ludicrous, but it's not funny because it's so hurtful."

Despite the fact the trans-inclusive policy passed, the hurt lingers. One of the fundamental principles of ethical journalism is the obligation to seek the truth. With the freedom of speech or of the press comes a very real responsibility. In wrongfully characterizing bigoted misinformation as advertising, the *Star Tribune* has both failed to uphold those standards and failed our community. The *Tribune* must be held responsible for the pivotal role they played in spreading hate and discrimination. Indeed, our trans brothers and sisters deserve an apology.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

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Dorr and Pagitt Are Unbeatable Musical Duo at Local Bars

Going back to the now-defunct Over the Rainbow Bar on West Seventh in St. Paul in 1997, musical impresarios Mia Dorr and DiDi Pagitt have been performing at a number of local GLBT bars. Currently, they are at Camp Bar in St. Paul every Sunday, 8-11 PM; Mattie's on Main in Minneapolis every other Thursday (January 8, 22, …), 8:30–11:30 p.m.; and as YOLO at The Town House the last Friday of every month, 9:00–11:30 p.m. They are also at St. Petersburg Vodka Bar in Robbinsdale and Crooner's Lounge and Supper Club in Fridley.

Chanteuse Dorr, who provides the awesome vocals, says, "Seventeen years ago, I was a singer, and then the GLBT community welcomed me with open arms. That changed my life, and now I am an entertainer. These years have taught me how a chosen family comes together to support each other and rally together during times of adversity. I feel very fortunate to be able to perform as often as we do, and it's because of the people who spend their time at our shows, some on a weekly basis, and some once a month or so, who give us the opportunity to entertain and do what we love the most. The past 17 years have been the blessing of my life, and I get weepy just thinking about it."

Pagitt, who is the show's producer, takes the song requests, and banters with the audience, adds, "The music at our shows is reflective of people who are in the audience. Mia was once referred to as 'a passionate and energetic performer with a repertoire of unparalleled diversity.' I love this description, because it describes her so succinctly. Our favorite music is what moves audience members, either physically in their chairs or in the memories in their minds, or stirs them in their souls. Those are the best ones!"

So, in this new year, don't miss the chance to experience the marvelous musical talent of Dorr and Pagitt. For more information, visit www.miadorrsinger.com or Mia Dorr's Facebook page. ■

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Mia Dorr (left) and DiDi Pagitt. Photo by George Holdgrafer

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

To the Minnesota Child Protection League, I say shame on you. Yours is the story of the classic fool whose hatred is fueled by ignorance and fear. Hatred, which propels the precious souls of our trans community to self-injurious behaviors including suicide, and drug and alcohol abuse. You are not protecting children. You have forgotten those who need to be championed the most. I would demand an apology but I mostly desire a remedy for your ignorance. I challenge you to meet our transgender friends, learn their stories, look into their eyes and find your common humanity.

Krug says: "The key is getting to know us as humans. All we want is the same thing as anyone else: a place that's safe, a decent job, our children to love us, and for them to succeed in the world. We want to love and be loved. We just take journeys that are very different and, all too often, far too public than most others."

The past few years have been political and personal turmoil for GLB and especially T people, and the scars remain. The bathroom, the locker room, should be safe, and we can at least be thankful that the Minnesota State High School League board got it right. ■

> 19 BAR

DECEMBER 5, 2014






> CAMP

DECEMBER 7, 2014

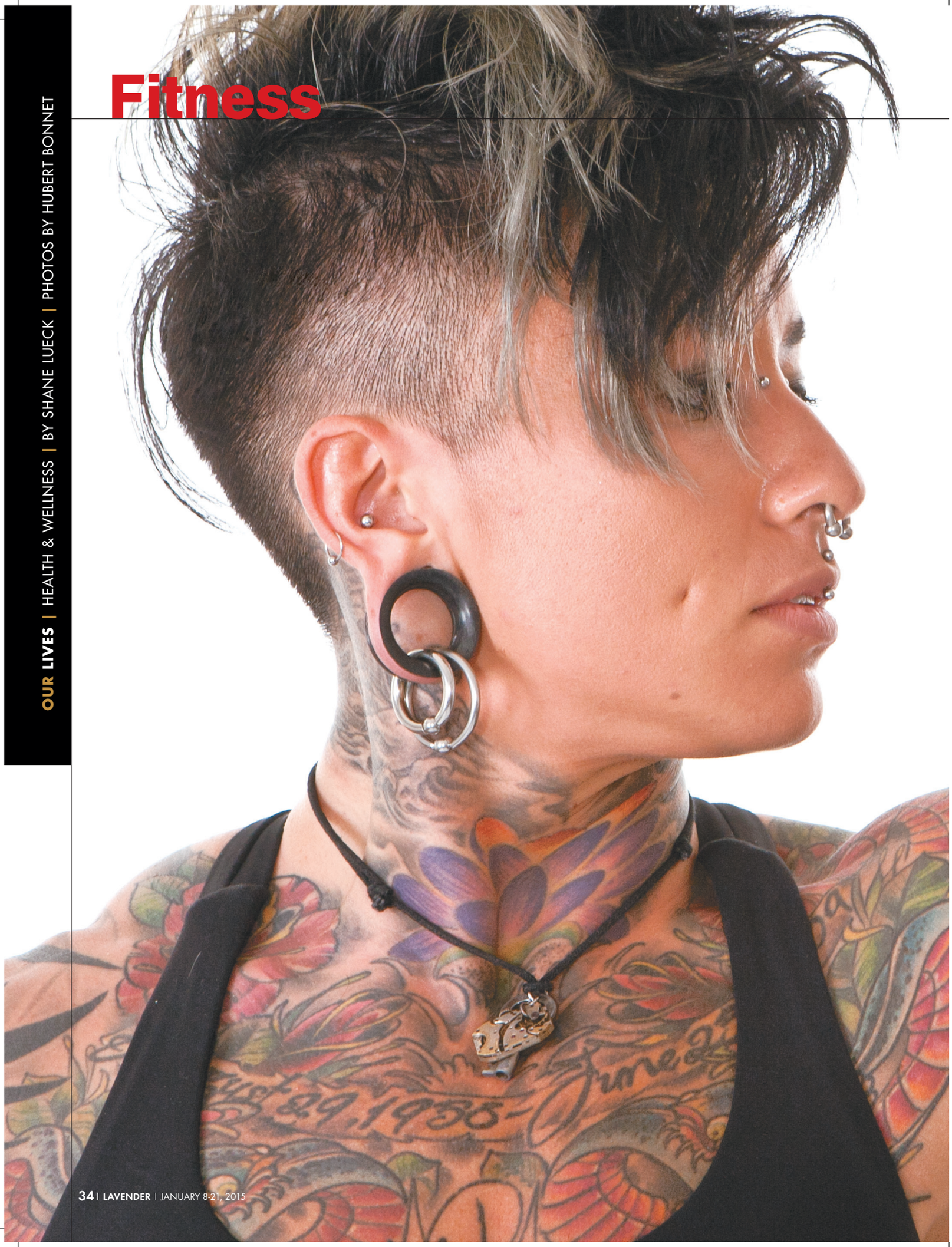









Fitness



BODYBUILDING
NOTHING WORTH HAVING COMES EASY

Emi Monson's story begins like so many others: she grew up in a fairly small city (Ham Lake, Minnesota), graduated college with honors, worked retail while attending college, and continued the retail route for a couple years after graduation to figure out where she wanted to go career-wise.

Deciding the retail route wasn't in her long-term goals, Emi convinced her tattoo artist at the time to take her on as an apprentice in 2011. As of last September, Emi has been working at Jackalope Tattoo in Minneapolis. "We are an all-female shop and I absolutely love it," she says.

And then came competitive bodybuilding. Active in various sports most of her life, Emi fell off the wagon with active sports upon graduating high school and found herself engulfed in school and living on a school diet. This subsequently led to a 30-pound weight gain her freshman year of college. "Believe it or not, it wasn't alcohol as I do not and did not drink," she says. "When I realized how much weight I had gained, I kind of freaked out."

Emi started hitting the gym every day, shedding every pound she had gained, eventually getting into yoga. It was one of her instructors (and now close friend) who had seen her progress in building strength and definition who suggested she try competing sometime.

"I am the type of person that if you challenge me with something I am bound to accept the challenge, so I decided to start







lifting weights and working on my diet," Emi says. "I ended up building a full gym in my basement by accumulating things from my parents and Craigslist. I even bought 20 full-size gym mirrors and installed them so I could watch my form and work on posing for competition."

Emi has since outgrown her home gym, having sold everything and hired a coach, and she's now is a regular at a local gym, which seems to be a formula for success. She has gone on to place in two competitions in 2014. In May, Emi won second place in the Iron Viking of the North competition's Women's Physique category and June saw her take first place in the Women's Physique category of the Minnesota State Classic, qualifying her for national competitions.

"The victories I had last year meant the world to me," Emi says. "I dedicated countless hours to training and preparing to compete. No matter how I was feeling I needed to find a way to press on and achieve my goals. Whether I was tired, stressed out, or feeling under the weather I continued to train and diet and push on."

The stress took a toll on Emi just before her second trophy. She shares, "I had a wedding to attend a few days prior and watching people eat cake and flavorful food literally brought me to tears that day."

Emi had to leave the wedding reception because it took such a toll on her mentally. But, she says, taking first place made it worth it. "I was pretty much in shock and have never smiled so big. And you better believe I froze a cupcake from the wedding and brought it with to the competition that day. I ate it right in front of my friends who were married earlier that week."

But what made this win extra special? Emi says that comparing her to the other female competitors, she stands out like a sore thumb. Most of the females have long hair, few to no tattoos or piercings, sparkly suits, and are extremely feminine. This is what the judges are used to seeing. And then there was Emi, with a mohawk, tons of tattoos and piercings and a plain black suit.

"It was clear to me that my look could impact the judges' scores for me after my first competition," she says, seeing score sheets where one of the judges gave her lower scores than one of the competitors who wasn't comparable to the shape Emi was in for the show. "However that is just the name of the game in this industry. If a judge doesn't like your look they will score you accordingly. So I have known that my appearance can easily negatively impact my scores with the amount of tattoo coverage I have, all of my piercings and my edgy hair cut. Because of this I knew, without a doubt, that when I took first place in my most recent competition that I earned it."

Competing is a lifestyle, not something you can just do temporarily and then quit. Your body rebounds badly and going back to an unhealthy diet after eating so clean will make you sick. Emi cautions, it is really a matter of changing an entire mindset and the way you live your life. On top of all the mental and physical investments, competing is a huge financial investment. Eating six times per day isn't cheap, especially with the high price of nutritional foods. Add in the cost of a coach, competition fees, a suit, tanning, makeup and hair, and a monthly gym fee, the investment to compete can add up to thousands of dollars. The commitment to compete is definitely not a small one.

Compared to those just interested in health and fitness, competing bares a lot of resemblances. The main difference is that competing includes a lot more dieting. "That is the only way we can get ourselves down to being able to see every muscle and have all almost no body fat," Emi says. "You could not survive on the amount of body fat we have on the day of a competition. You could survive a few days, and then after that you're going to get sick."

Because of the extremism of the competing diet, Emi emphasizes that it isn't every day occurrence and is really only reserved for competition days and, as she stated, will make a person sick. The competition diet isn't recommended for those looking to be healthy and maintain regular fitness. Other than the extremely strict diet, Emi says that most people who are in to fitness probably do a lot of the same things. "I find that even my friends who simply like to work out and eat healthy but don't compete make a lot of the same life decisions and devote the same amount of time I do to their fitness. I've found that most people who are fitness-oriented spend most days working out, eating healthy, and making life decisions that allow them to keep their bodies fit and healthy."

In terms of her future, Emi says she is honestly unsure of what it has in store for her. She plans to compete as long as she can, hoping to some day earn a pro card and do larger competitions, but right now Emi is taking it year by year.

"I am currently just trying to help inspire others to become fit and healthy," she says. "I think it is important for everyone to be healthy and happy. I have had a lot of friends or even just followers from social media tell me that my constant posts about working out, changes I am making in myself, or healthy food tips are inspiring for them and that is something I want to continue to do."

For people looking to compete, Emi subscribes to one thought: You can do literally anything you put your mind to, "Just make sure that you are ready to be challenged both mentally and phsyically," she says.

Perhaps the hardest part of competing is finding the right support group. Emi advises surrounding yourself with people who support you in your goals and who want you to succeed. She warns that people are going to question every aspect of the competing lifestyle: why you eat so little, why you eat so much, why you eat so frequently, why you won't just have a drink or eat a candy bar with them.

"People will try to pressure you to stop dieting or to take a break," Emi says. "You will find that a lot of people might not necessarily understand why you are competing. I had friends literally take my lifestyle change personally and were frustrated that my schedule worked around when I ate and worked out. Competing is not an easy thing to do but it is worth every second of sweat and tears in the end. Strive to achieve your goals no matter what and you will succeed in the end." ■

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Health

GLBTQ HEALTH DISPARITIES AND THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT



If you've attended a Minnesota Pride event recently, you've probably been asked to take the Rainbow Health Initiative (RHI) Voices of Health survey. The Voices of Health survey is an effort by RHI to document the health of Minnesota's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities. If you have participated in this survey, congratulations! You are contributing to the advancement of GLBTQ health equity. The new 2015 survey is already available online at www.rainbowhealth.org as RHI is trying to increase the number of surveys taken through online access and social media campaigns.

The Voices of Health data results show that health care professionals, community members, organizations, and policy makers need to address the significant health disparities in the GLBTQ communities. RHI uses this data to inform the Education and Training Program, advocate for GLBTQ health rights and inclusion, and create safe spaces for those seeking health care.

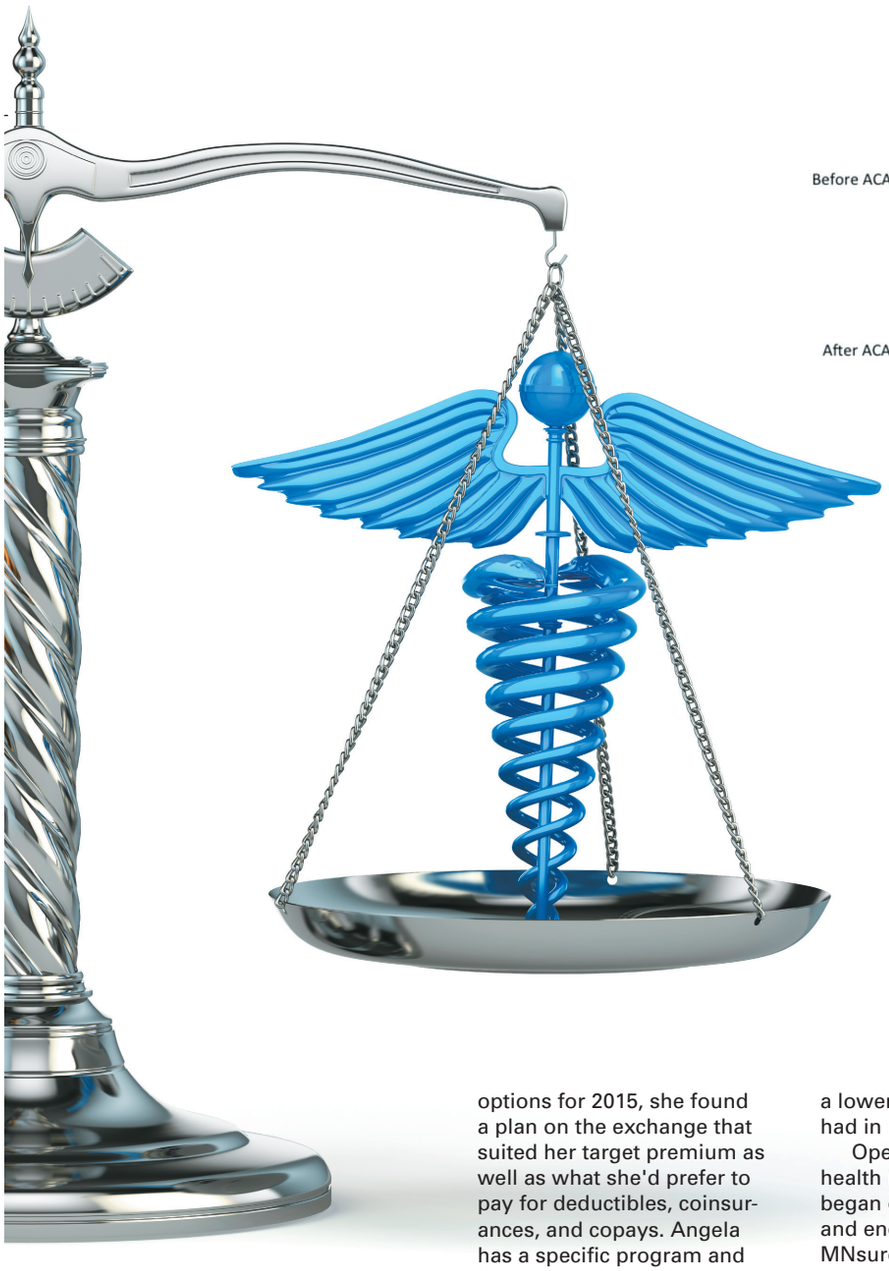
Data from the last three years' RHI Voices of Health show that, when compared to non-GLBTQ individuals, GLBTQ individuals in Minnesota are more likely to report a history of anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder, are less likely to have health insurance, and are more likely to use tobacco or abuse alcohol. Compounding these disparities is the fact that GLBTQ individuals often face discrimination when accessing care. More than one in ten GLBTQ individuals report having been discriminated against by a health care provider because of sexual orientation or gender identity in the last twelve months, and one in six report receiving poor quality care because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in the last twelve months.

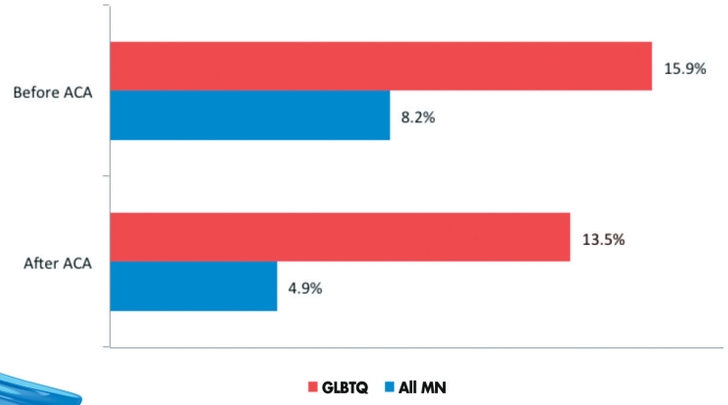
Your health is one of the most important aspects of your life. However, the data is clear; GLBTQ communities are facing significant health disparities. Having the proper insurance and health care will improve your quality of life. These disparities will not change overnight, but getting covered and seeking GLBTQ culturally competent health care will go a long way in improving our communities' health.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), implemented through MNsure in Minnesota, is important to improving the health of GLBTQ communities. Since its implementation in 2013, the percentage of uninsured Minnesotans has dropped from 8.2% to 4.9%. However, GLBTQ Minnesotans tend to be uninsured at a higher rate than the general population, especially among GLBTQ people of color, lower income GLBTQ, and transgender individuals. According to the preliminary figures from the data collected by RHI's Voices of Health survey, the uninsured rate for GLBTQ Minnesotans dropped from 15.9% in 2013 to 13.5% in 2014*.

Although, under the ACA, the overall uninsured rate for GLBTQ has dropped, the gap between non-GLBTQ and GLBTQ has gotten larger; despite policy changes in the Affordable Care Act should make that insurance more affordable and more inclusive for GLBTQ individuals. MNsure provides access to some affordable health plans and can offer tax credits to assist you with your premiums. Additionally, MNsure provides protections for consumers. You can no longer be denied coverage because a preexisting condition. You also cannot be denied coverage or charged a higher premium because of medical history, and there is no annual or lifetime dollar limits on coverage. The Affordable Care Act also bars insurance companies from denying someone insurance due to their sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity; however, it is important to remember that some plans may have exclusions or restrictions around what procedures they cover, especially related to hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery.

Before the Affordable Care Act, someone with a preexist-





Percent of people without Health Insurance in Minnesota: GLBTQ vs All Minnesotans Before and After the Affordable Care Act

ing condition typically had to choose coverage solely based on how well a plan covered the care related to that condition. Now, new regulations prohibit insurance companies from denying coverage to people with preexisting conditions and on the exchanges, plans cannot include a person's preexisting condition in the calculation of their rates. The only factors that can affect your premiums are your age, where you live, and whether you smoke. This means that people can look at a variety of plans and choose the one that works best for them, rather than picking one that will only cover treatment for their preexisting condition.

For example, when Angela** was researching her insurance options for 2015, she found a plan on the exchange that suited her target premium as well as what she'd prefer to pay for deductibles, coinsurances, and copays. Angela has a specific program and therapists who are helping her with an eating disorder treatment. In order to select the best option for her needs, Angela called the insurance provider for the plan that she had selected on the exchange. The plan she was considering did not have a wide enough network to include her eating disorder program. What happened next surprised her.

Angela** found that although she had previously been denied individual coverage, because her weight was considered a preexisting condition, the Affordable Care Act allowed her to enroll in one of the insurance provider's individual plans. This plan includes her eating disorder program, has a premium that works within her budget and also has a lower deductible than she's had in many years.

Open enrollment for 2015 health insurance coverage began on November 15, 2014 and ends February 15, 2015. MNsure is the Minnesota Affordable Care Act marketplace for residents to shop, compare, and choose health insurance coverage that meets their needs. It is also the only place to get financial assistance. Depending on household size and income, Minnesotans may qualify for low-cost public insurance programs or a discounted plan from a private insurance company.

There are three ways to get free enrollment assistance. You can call the MNsure contact center at 1-855-3-MNSURE (1-855-366-7873) and speak with trained specialists to answer questions. Visit an agent or broker. These trained and licensed professionals offer free face-to-face enrollment assistance and advice to help you select a plan. Or, visit a MNsure Navigator. Navigators are individuals from trusted organizations trained to provide free face-to-face applications and enrollment assistance.

A few organizations in Minnesota are trained and sensitive to the unique needs of GLBTQ communities. You can find these Navigators at the Minnesota AIDS Project, Family Tree Clinic, Planned Parenthood, and the Rural AIDS Action Network (outside of the Twin Cities metro). If you are looking for a provider, visit www.rainbowhealth/resources-for-you and search RHI's Provider Directory. ■

**Official 2014 Voices of Health data will be released on February 16, 2015, visit www.rainbow-health.org or find us on Facebook and Twitter.*

***Name changed to protect the identity of the individual.*

Health

TRANS HEALTH AT FAMILY TREE CLINIC

Eli* is a patient at Family Tree Clinic. He's a transgender man in his late 40s and hasn't seen a health care provider in well over ten years. His fear of being mistreated or discriminated against because of his gender identity prevented him from getting the check up he desperately needed. Going to the doctor is a potentially traumatic experience for Eli and other trans, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming folks.

Luckily, Eli heard about Family Tree Clinic from a friend and finally felt able to make an appointment. He recently visited the clinic and got the long overdue STI screening, blood pressure check, and pap test he needed.

When he left, he shared with the staff that he felt an overwhelming sense of relief after having the first medical experience of his life where he felt fully respected, seen, and safe. These are the experiences Family Tree Clinic strives to provide.

In 2009, Family Tree Clinic launched their LGBTQ Health Access Initiative because they saw a huge need for culturally competent, accessible health care in the Twin Cities. Although the research on LGBTQ health is somewhat limited, it has been well documented that LGBTQ individuals often face difficulty accessing healthcare, are less likely to be insured, have higher rates of HIV and STIs, higher rates of smoking and substance abuse, and disproportionately experience violence and trauma in their lives and personal relationships.

Health care providers of all types tend to be poorly equipped to adequately serve these patients and to address their unique health needs. In an attempt to help address these stark inequities, Family Tree Clinic has worked hard over the past 5 years to expand their LGBTQ-specific services, improve organizational practices to better serve queer and trans patients, and to educate their full staff, from the front desk to the billing department and medical providers. Family Tree's goal is to meet the needs of Eli and folks like him.

If you haven't heard of Family Tree Clinic before, they have been a leader in sexual and reproductive health and education for over 40 years. The clinic is located in the Midway neighborhood of St. Paul and serves people from across the metro area and beyond. They also have outstanding sex educators who teach medically accurate, facts-based sex ed classes to youth and adults throughout the metro, as well as a unique and much-needed education program specific to the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing.

This year, Family Tree expanded clinical services to include minor illness care (things like upper respiratory infections, smoking cessa-

tion, and immunizations) and, during the next few months, they will be expanding services to the transgender community by offering sliding fee trans hormone care. Via the guidance of their patients and the LGBTQ community, Family Tree Clinic clearly heard that the trans community is in need of more access to hormone care.

In 2014, close to 20 percent of Family Tree's total patients are LGBTQ-identified. When they started the initiative, only about nine percent of their patients identified themselves as LGBTQ. Alissa Light, executive director said, "We feel honored and proud that LGBTQ people in our community trust us and choose us to be their health care provider. Through our work caring for many LGBTQ patients and clients like Eli, one of the things that we have learned over and over is that our transgender, genderqueer and gender non-conforming communities experience huge disparities in terms of their overall health and well-being, and in their ability to access health care."

That is especially true for the folks who are living at the intersections and experience multiple barriers to health care, often living in poverty, without health insurance, and navigating medical systems that may be racist, transphobic, classist and misogynist. Light said, "It is hard to be healthy and to get even the most basic health care needs met when an entire system is built against you. We know that it's essential to take the whole person into account, to see the ways they walk through life and understand how their identities and experiences affect their health. This is why community clinics like Family Tree Clinic are so important."

Family Tree's organizational journey towards being an ally to trans and gender non-conforming folks hasn't always been easy or simple. It's a path that continues to unfold with some growing pains along the way. As an organization that has historically been led by white, cisgender women, this process of integrating trans health services has been an opportunity for self-reflection and transformation. Because Family Tree Clinic is an organization that has always been deeply rooted in social justice and health equity, they have been lucky to find overwhelming support from their staff, board, patients, and wider community in becoming the clinic the community needs them to be.

New and exciting things are on the horizon for Family Tree. Under the guidance and direct participation of the transgender community and building on their partnerships with community organizations like the MN Trans Health Coalition, Family Tree Clinic is building a trans hormone program that mirrors their holistic, affirming, patient-centered approach to health care. "We have heard loud and clear that our community needs a program that doesn't have so many gate keepers. As a result, we're working to build a hormone program that's based on an informed consent model. It will be launched in June 2015 and will be sliding fee, just like all of the services we provide."

Meeting the direct needs of their patients is always their number one priority. However, Family Tree's ultimate hope is systemic change among community clinics across the region, allowing increased access to excellent hormone care and healthcare for the people who need it most—people like Eli. And It seems they're on the path to do just that. ■

**Name changed to protect privacy.*

Erin Wilkins writes for Family Tree Clinic, provider of specialized care for LGBTQ individuals through all stages of life. Family Tree Clinic has been serving the Twin Cities community for over 40 years by providing high-quality and affordable health care on a sliding fee scale. Learn more at www.familytreeclinic.org.



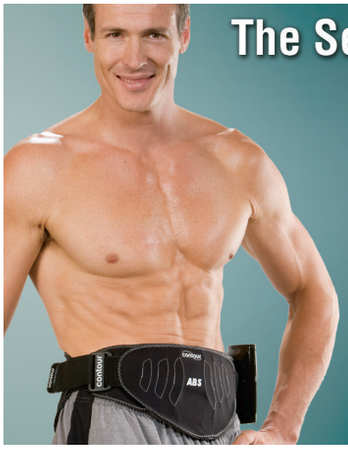
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RIDE REVIEW | BY RANDY STERN | PHOTOS BY RANDY STERN

2015 Honda CR-V



What you are looking at is the best selling crossover/SUV in the USA.

How did the Honda CR-V get there? Think about what Honda has been since making a splash with the Civic in 1972. Being an engineer and mechanic who refused to compromise and sees the larger picture, Sochiro Honda forged a philosophy of taking a basic idea and elevating it to the next level. The CVCC engine changed the way engines were designed to meet emissions standards worldwide. VTEC also took the idea of electronically controlled multi-port fuel injection and forged the balance between performance and efficiency. Components found on more expensive automobiles made their way onto Hondas. They also shifted design to distinguish run-of-the-mill cars from Honda's own models.

From these ideals came proper execution. The consumers came and fell in love with Honda's small crossover to the point of taking deliveries at a clip of an average of 25,000 units a month in this country.

In fact, our community buys more than our fair share of CR-Vs. There has to be a reason why. I drove the brand new 2015 Touring model during our first snowfall of the season to find out.

The first thing you notice about the new CR-V is a combination of familiar and different elements melded together rather nicely. The grille is new for 2015, influenced by a design that began with last year's Civic Coupe and is

now seen on the latest Fit. The taillights are new versions from CR-Vs past, but everything else is all new. As visually polarizing as it might seem, it is a huge improvement from what the critics have told us about Honda design of late. As a matter of fact, I like it.

In some respects, the new CR-V may seem bigger. In actuality, it is. Over time, the CR-V increased in size by various leaps, but retained its membership in a highly competitive class. It is taller, but ripe for families needing a two-row crossover with plenty of cargo space. This translates into a sizable glasshouse that helps drivers and passengers alike to see better all around. The rear quarter window's odd shape is not much help in terms of creating a blind spot at the corners.

Cargo access is aided by a huge liftgate. This comes into play for various scenarios like a trip to the home improvement store, extended vacations, and tailgating at sporting events. Lift over is low, which helps in many of these uses—especially when you put down the second row in creating enough room for a serious dose of retail therapy. Before you pick up that big item from the store, try the second row fold-down operation. Just pull the strap under the rear seat cushion, lift it toward the front seat and let the seat back just glide down into place. This is perhaps the nicest rear seat fold-down operation in the business.

You feel the largesse of the CR-V inside with room for five adults across two rows of seating. The big front seats provide reasonable comfort and some bolstering, while the rear seats really do not need any adjustment to enjoy three-across comfort. The leather in the Touring tester is supple and soft. It is actually a great place to work in, have a meeting, or introduce new friends to your life.

Normally, Honda's interior designers usually throw a few curve balls at us. In the CR-V, they did not. The instrument panel provides a mix of upscale touches and tactile simplicity. A digital readout in the middle of the speedometer gives you all of the trip information you need. Switches and levers are good to the touch on and around the steering wheel. Some switches are hidden from view on the lower part of the left side of the instrument panel.

Like most Hondas reviewed here, the Touring model came with two center screens. The upper one is the i-MID, a static display that could set up a page for time, fuel consumption, or audio playback. The lower screen is a touchscreen for audio and navigation. If you configure these screens properly, they will work. However, small navigational buttons on the left of the touchscreen could be a bit too small for some fingers.

Sound from the AM/FM/SiriusXM/CD audio system is quite good. You get 328 watts of sound through seven speakers, the seventh being a subwoofer. A Bluetooth-compatible phone works well with both phone functions and streaming audio from your song files. There is a provision for you to stream your Pandora channels through these seven speakers.

Honda stuck to a single engine lineup for the CR-V, something you rarely see in the compact crossover segment. The 185 horsepower 2.4-liter Earth Dreams engine offers strong delivery and balanced cruising. It can get a bit noisy when the throttle is pushed hard, but it does quiet down when it settles into its groove. It is mated to a brand-new Continuously Variable Transmission and Honda's Real Time all-wheel drive system. To make things more efficient to run, there's the Eco Assist button to depress. That changes the timing and gearing to induce more efficiency from the driveline. Honda makes some very good drivelines that are smooth to operate and easy to manage. The CR-V's setup meets those expectations just fine.

One thing to understand about the CR-V is its mission: to haul families. One does not expect a CR-V to race on Sunday or dodge the crazies on the highway. Therefore, its main tenet is a supple ride that does not offend anyone sitting inside of its huge cabin. When presented with a pothole or any deep road imperfection, the suspension does its best to soften the shock. You do feel that pothole, however.

A supple ride should be balanced with good handling. The CR-V handles quite competently in both normal and evasive situations. However, there is plenty of body roll through the curves and corners. The brakes felt as though they were improved from previous CR-Vs with a solid feel for normal, panic, and winter stops; however, I found the brake pedal too close to the accelerator. That is a potential safety issue.

Speaking of safety, the Touring model adds several features for the first time on the CR-V. This includes a collision mitigation braking system and lane departure warning with the lane keeping assist system—all very useful for a crossover/SUV. Active cruise control is another feature exclusive to the Touring as a very welcomed feature on the CR-V.

One thing I look for in a crossover/SUV is fuel economy. There are cases when a certain consumption number is deemed acceptable. Some consumers would rather hit the estimated highway number all of the time. Let's be realistic—you won't. The good news is that the CR-V came in with an average fuel consumption figure of 24.4 MPG. In my book, that's a good realistic average for a two-row, four-cylinder crossover/SUV in the CR-V's class.

Then, there's the bottom line. A good crossover/SUV has to be good value for the money. The CR-V lineup starts with a front-drive LX model at $23,320. Our top-of-the-line Touring model with all-wheel drive model came out to $33,650.

Rarely do we celebrate a crossover with good value and a huge cabin. The Honda CR-V is worth celebrating. The CR-V is a mainstream choice in a highly competitive marketplace. One would have to look around to see why. Not just the latest models; all four generations of CR-Vs. That should tell you how mainstream and popular this model has become.

Somehow, *Motor Trend* magazine agreed. They named the revised CR-V their SUV of The Year. The new CR-V is a very comfortable, capable, and competent crossover/SUV for today's consumer. Compared to what I have driven over the past few years, the CR-V is a very solid choice to make. ■







DATELAND | BY JENNIFER PARELLO

Objective Uncoupling

A few weeks ago, I spotted an obituary of Ayn Rand's paramour, Nathaniel Branden. *The New York Times* used the word "paramour" in the headline, which tickled me to no end. It invoked a more emotionally nuanced time of lost romantic rituals: seduction scenes on fainting couches and getting tipsy on spirits of elderflower.

I've tried to read Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* at least a dozen times, but I've never managed to finish it. I always give up about halfway through, because her lead character—the idealistic architect Howard Roark—is about as compelling as a piece of tree bark. So, I always abandon the novel before it turns sexy. Apparently, those patient enough to muddle through Roark's endless treatises on the joys of unrestricted capitalism and the value of ego are rewarded with rough, sweaty sex in a rock quarry, followed by a dizzying soap opera that ends with a rape victim gleefully marrying her rapist.

Who knew that Ayn Rand, that patron saint of pragmatism, had it in her? She of the severe haircuts and opposition to altruism. (What type of monster opposes altruism?) Well, according to the obituary of Nathaniel Branden, Rand enjoyed something other than spending her weekends discussing philosophy with her admirers. She liked having sex with them, too.

There have been suggestions that she dabbled in the dark bedroom arts with a young Alan Greenspan, the future Federal Reserve Chairman and pinup boy for the Reagan administration. And her affair with Branden, who was 25 years her junior, was well documented. They shared a passion for "rational selfishness" and oral sex, so with the consent of both of their spouses, they embarked on a long affair, which eventually ended in a very public fashion.

OK, so why am I writing about this? Well, I've been doing some research into the best ways to end a romantic relationship. Lately, I've witnessed a blizzard of breakups in my circle of friends, one more ugly than the next. Ever since gay marriage became legal, it seems that every gay I know is rushing into matrimony simply to legitimize their desire to divorce. And, sadly, no one is doing it with any style.

It's all so obvious and dreary: fights over money and pets; demands that their friends take sides in the split-up; late-night drunken confessions on Facebook about their ex's sexual inadequacies.

So, I was interested to learn how a bloodless intellectual like Rand handled her breakup with Branden. Surely, someone who opposed democracy on the grounds that the masses were "lice" and "parasites," would be far more evolved than we lowly vermin and would negotiate a breakup with cool emotional distance. But, I was wrong.

Rand founded a philosophical movement called Objectivism, which maintains that the only virtue is selfishness. She and Branden used this philosophy to justify their adulterous affair: it made them happy, so they did it. However, when Branden began an affair with a fashion model 35 years younger than Rand, Objectivism was tossed out the window.

Rand, a woman scorned, reacted by banishing Branden from her inner circle and publicly denouncing him in her intellectual journal, *The Objectivist*. So, basically, she did what we all do: she became petty and vicious and demanded that her friends exile him. And then she posted mean stuff about him on what was, in effect, an old-timey version of Facebook.

So, the moral to this column: all the recent talk about "conscious uncoupling" is just nonsense. Breakups are messy and dreadful and no one does them well. So, embrace the awfulness and enjoy the social media rants. And be kind, because when it's your turn to breakup, you'll do it just as badly. ■

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Minneapolis, MN
(612) 373-AIDS (metro) or
(800) 248-AIDS (statewide)
mapaidsline@mnaidsproject.org
www.mnaidsproject.org

Park House
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www.familytreeclinic.org

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www.twincities.hrc.org
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THROUGH THESE EYES | BY JUSTIN JONES

Town Car

"Dammit Howard, you're swerving all over the damn road," my grandmother says. We're in my grandparents' Lincoln Town Car on our way to my aunt's country house. My mother's sitting with me in the backseat.

My grandfather snaps, "You wanna drive, Minnie?"

Randy Travis is playing on the radio, "Forever and Ever, Amen." The car smells of stale tobacco and my mother's perfume; cigarette burns cover blue fabric upholstery. It's sweltering inside—the air conditioner is "peculiar," my grandmother says.

"Now look here, Scooter." My grandmother turns to me. "You behave for your aunt. She's got company with her. I don't want you hollerin' and runnin' around the house, you hear?"

I nod before she finishes. My grandmother wipes sweat off of her face with a Kleenex she keeps in her bra.

I'm always excited for trips to my aunt's country house. It means smelling antiques and driving Jim Taylor's golf cart and dressing up in my aunt's fur coats and visiting The Front Porch, a restaurant with all-you-can-eat fried chicken.

I spin in my seat and kneel to look through the rear window. My uncle and his strange long-term never-married woman-friend follow in a blue car. My mother turns with me, to watch them argue. They always argue. My mother and I laugh.

"Y'all straighten up back there," my grandmother yells.

"We're straightenin', Mama," my mother says and helps settle me back in.

"We're straightenin'."

Straightening.

I'm straightening.

I'm straightening my cuff links in the back of a black Lincoln Town Car. My grandparents vanish from their seats, still fussing. Cigarette-scarred fabric transforms into new leather, Randy Travis fades into jazz music, my mother dissolves into a glossy wooden armrest and two bottles of Evian mineral water.

Outside my car door stands a driver in a crisp black suit and matching hat. He smiles and closes me in. It's freezing inside.

I'm on my way to an art gallery opening in Chelsea, where for the low price of $15,000, you, too, can become the owner of a one square-foot block of solid color on canvas.

"How are you today?" my driver asks.

"I'm well, thank you."

I lean against my chilly window and refill the front seats with my grandparents and smile at their fussing. I'm suddenly excited about the country house. I feel my mother rubbing my knee.

"How's the temperature?"

I want my driver to fuss at me for no reason, to tell me to behave in case I had the notion not to. I turn around in my seat and look through the rear window, awaiting my grandmother's reprimand.

"A beautiful view from every angle," my driver says.

My vision focuses on an autumn park.

"Yeah." I turn back into my seat.

We pull up in front of an inconspicuous walk-up and catch the eye of a doorman who starts on his way to open my car door. I open it on my own. He apologizes as I walk toward the building, as if I were disappointed he hadn't been quicker.

The gallery opening is a whispers-only event, enclosed in a single gloomy room with white walls and no furnishings; here the glitterati marvel at the artist's *œuvre.* Gorgeous teenage girls and *GQ*-worthy men walk around with trays of what smells like food but looks like décor. A surprisingly older server—she must be in her mid-twenties—dips into my circle of friends and presents a silver platter.

"Pardon," she says, "*Saumon*, *fromage blanc*, *canapé*."

My friends "mmmm" in unison and each grab a piece.

"That's fish, cheese, and celery to us country folk," I say and wave the woman away. My friends laugh. I roll my eyes.

Around the gallery I spot a couple in their forties squinting at a small piece of art.

I'm cynical imagining their conversation:

"But don't you feel Jimmy would prefer a weekend in St. Martin for his fifth birthday?" asks the woman with a fake Thatcher-esque accent.

"We'll do both," her husband says. "We simply *must* have this painting in Jimmy's bathroom—you know, the bathroom that no one ever uses; he'll love it the moment he sees it." And then the couple giggles and toasts. Meanwhile I think about running around my grandmother's backyard in a dirty cape made from a pillowcase. I feel sorry for Jimmy.

"I gotta go," I say to my group and down half a glass of champagne.

"Where are you going?" asks a friend as she checks her nails.

"I am going to find a Kentucky Fried Chicken." ■

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